

ROLLING EGG



notes from the Providence Fringe Festival 2018 // daily // free

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"SNAKE IN THE DESERT DRIPPING MILK"

regarding architecture, theatre, chairs I sat in, stuff I heard

The outer space guy was really great and did something very small and nice and shocking and casual at the end. Do I say what it is? It wasn't like "the punchline" but if you go in expecting something, that changes it, right? It was a really small and nice moment. We were all in his pocket and he was just up there expressing quiet joy, which is basically 100% what I want at this point in time (August 2018).

Upstairs at Waterfire in a small room for Roommate Ellen's packed show. Roommate Ellen is not my roommate, that's just how we were introduced, and the name stuck (in my mind). It's a nice category of person- roommate. Also a great way to approach a show I think-- "my roommate's doing a thing". The show was a whirlwind data dump about Saint Theresa, it ruled, and at a certain point Roommate Ellen's nutty professor character got so zazzed on the data that she had to take a lap around the complex while an apparition of St Theresa swirled about the room. During this time (3 minutes) me and the other audience members just sat in silence under a blue powerpoint. It was a wild move but perfect for the material. The very eye of the hurricane as it were, the stillness around which everything swirls but you can't just walk to in a straight line. At some point a smiley face on the projected screen aligned perfectly with the saint's ecstatic throat, I think it was one of those unchoreographable moments of perfection, like when a dragonfly lands on the guitar. I unlocked the Dark Catholicism badge. TW: frenetic scholarship, some mortification, MicroMachines voice.

"THERE WAS A CHERUB STANDING NEAR"

Yesterday I stayed at just one place the whole night so today I walked around. I took the little spur of the bike path that I usually use to get to Price Rite, the one with the Heraclitus riff painted on the wall next to the river. Adding to Heraclitus's main claim that no one can set foot in the same river twice, a serious-looking nearby sign amends that no one should set foot in *this* river even *once*. Eating fish from this river (any amount of times) is also strongly worded against.

As I walked by the river there was a guy asleep on the wall and his big belly was pulling in deep draughts of night air, then see-sawing them back out. I thought to myself "that's how you do it".

I walked back the same way but much later. I found myself well along the path and headed directly into darkness with no way to turn off. I just powered through. I soon realized that on the edge of darkness, the darkness lights up. No problem. Two people walked towards me in the inky night but peeled off into the grass with their phone lights out, looking for something. Maybe a dropped key or a favorite lighter or something. I hope they found it! I would say the darkness level was "ample"- dark enough for any purpose including: dark enough to lose something, dark enough that finding it is a trial, dark enough to scare me, dark enough that there's nothing I can do, dark enough that I like it.

fold along this line and use this sign to express joy

I LOVE IT!

SMELLS

Contemporary art galleries have their own special smell, and art museums have a bunch of different nested smells depending on the era of the works exhibited, ranging from leathery/chocolately to sour plum and Windex. Punk shows obviously have a smell and noise shows do too, though with noise the smells vary depending on the sort of energy of the event, on an axis from Dionysian (same smell as punk) to Apollonian (same smell as gallery). Even poetry has smells- wine, seltzer, and in Providence, those 3/4 size chocolate chip cookies Kate Schapira makes. I was excited to sniff out the theatre smells but my research indicates it's just fresh black paint and nothing else. The ceilings tend to be high and the people tend to be spread out, so smells just waft away. It's cool though, it kind of makes you feel like a ghost.

I guess the takeaway here is if you go on a date to the theatre make sure to match it with something that smells, like dinner, a walk in the night air, or like, a cheese platter. Otherwise the ghost vibe will be too strong.

"TEETH BARED BUT NOT TO MENACE AND NOT TO CHEW"

Great chairs at the Willbury- slightly padded and sea green, great for the long haul. They invested in this detail and for this reviewer it pays off immeasurably.

I got a beer but I was so hot from walking around that I needed to make sure it was like, truly cold. So I asked "what do you have that's cold?" and the bartender said "everything is cold, including my personality". But that was demonstrably false-- I found him to be warm and effusive and I told him as much. The beer was pay-what-you-want, and I did, but then I had a moment on the way to my seat of wondering if the jar I put my money in was the tip jar and payment was supposed to go somewhere else, some other jar. Did I tip magnanimously on a payment of zero? If so then I confess, that is truly what I want to pay, anytime, for anything.

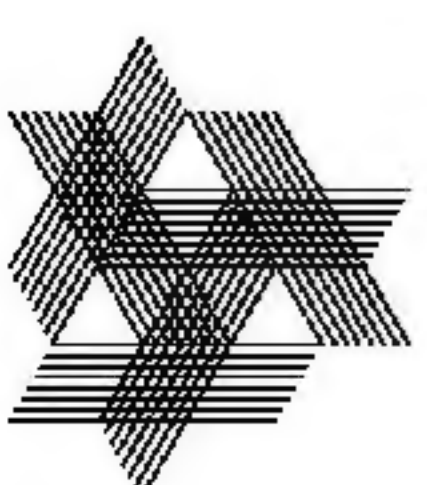
"..."

There's a lot of unreasonable activity in this play but check this out-- this lady asks for and gets cold coffee in a house visit scenario? That's nuts. Am I out of the loop? Do people just have iced coffee kicking in the fridge? Then she asks for cream and scoffs when there's only half and half?!? I feel like "cream" is a category and within that is "half and half". If you want heavy cream you gotta say "heavy cream". Also everyone pours like a shot of wine into the glass at a time?? Is that how you wine? I don't want to be overly critical about beverages and I know everyone's working hard here, this is a very minor point. And in some ways it's comforting! It's a relief to have this clear instance in which the reality of the play disconnects with my reality. Because everyone in this play is mean, and I don't live in Everyone Mean World, where half and half is non-standard, I live in There's Some Cool Parts World, with enough wine. I saw a horror movie like this once where instead of cell phones everyone had these weird little clams-- it didn't fit into the story at all but it was so considerate to reassure us in this subtle way that this story doesn't happening on our timeline. Attention everyone: I have changed my mind from I sort of didn't like this to I appreciate it. Please make a note.

IF IT'S RIGHT
I DON'T KNOW



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